

## Message from Mayor Wilson:



April 29, 2020

I want to start off by thanking our first responders and healthcare workers who have been on the front lines of fighting COVID-19. You are deserving of the highest recognition for your sacrifice to help those who are sick and in need of care. To our residents and businesses, thank you for working diligently to help flatten the curve and stop the spread of COVID-19. These have been unprecedented times, and I know it's been a challenging time for many and has substantially impacted the finances of individuals, businesses and government operations throughout the country. We have had to make some difficult decisions. Following the state and county's orders to alter city programs and services has been tough, but necessary, as the safety and health of our community is top priority.

From an economic standpoint, we have operational reserves that are allowing us to adjust to the emergency. We quickly recognized the potential impact to our budget, and a hiring freeze and other measures were implemented back in March. We have worked diligently to pursue other means of funding, but cities under 500,000 in population are not scheduled to receive direct relief from the federal government. Like many businesses, we have had to take cost cutting measures that have directly impacted our employees and those we serve.

Hurst City Council has made the decision to cancel summer programs and events, including our aquatics season and Hurst Stars and Stripes. This will help ease the financial burden during this difficult time and savings will go towards funding essential services. We hope you find comfort in knowing that financial savings from these decisions will help provide for our first responder services.

We are looking at reopening city facilities sometime between mid-May and early June to allow more time for data collection and planning. We will focus on financial sustainability and the Governor's safety recommendations to responsibly reopen. Our connection to the community remains important as City Council and staff determine future operational hours and services. For the latest updates on city facilities, programs and services, you can visit our website at [hursttx.gov/coronavirus](https://hursttx.gov/coronavirus).

Per my emergency declaration, which was supported by the City Council, the city continues to follow Tarrant County's and Governor Abbott's orders. Thank you to our residents and businesses for working diligently to follow these orders to help flatten the curve and stop the spread of COVID-19. Practicing social distancing is vital to continue to help stop the spread, and we thank you for doing your part to help keep our community safe. Through this difficult time, we will continue to provide essential services and strive to offer excellent customer service. Hurst continues to be a community built on connection, and I am looking forward to working with the council, staff and our residents to define the new normal as we move forward under the Governor's guidelines and analyze our financial resources. These have been tough times, but I'm confident better times are ahead. I want to thank my fellow councilmembers and city staff and let our citizens know we will work tirelessly to manage our way through this challenging time.